

The President. Oh, I certainly hope so. I'm very interested in continuing to work in the climate change area in particular and doing what I can to convince the political systems of countries that have to participate in this that there are economically beneficial ways to do the right thing for the global environment. And in order to do that, we have to continue the basic research into alternative fuels and alternative technologies. There is no way to solve this over the long run unless you can get more growth out of fewer greenhouse gases. There is no way to do it. And so, on that alone, I will continue to be very interested.

The other thing that I'm particularly personally interested in is the breakdown of public health systems in so many countries, and how it disables them from dealing with things like the AIDS epidemic and other problems, and what we can do to sort of put that back together again. So I expect those are two areas that I'll be involved in for a long time to come, if I have the opportunity to be.

Mr. Rubinstein. Thanks very much. I hope that we can ask you some questions about it later, when you're doing those things.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 4:20 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 21. In his remarks, the President referred to Eric Lander, director, Whitehead/MIT Center for Genome Research; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom, and his wife, Sigrid; J. Craig Venter, founder, The Institute for Genome Research, and president and chief scientific officer, Celera Genomics Corp.; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jiang Zemin of China; and President Jacques Chirac of France. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Action To Reduce Diesel Emissions

December 21, 2000

A year ago today I announced the toughest air pollution standards for new cars and sport utility vehicles. Today we take another bold

step to clean our air. We are adopting strong new measures to dramatically reduce unhealthy and unsightly emissions from trucks and buses powered by diesel fuel. Together, these actions represent the most sweeping effort ever to protect our air and our health from the pollution caused by the vehicles we drive. They ensure that by the end of the decade, every new car, truck, and SUV in America will be up to 95 percent cleaner than those on the road today.

Today's action by the Environmental Protection Agency mandates cleaner diesel fuel and extends the latest pollution control technology to all trucks and buses for the first time. These advances will prevent not only the thick plumes of diesel exhaust all too familiar to motorists but also thousands of cases of respiratory illness and premature deaths. We will spare thousands of children and elderly the agony of asthma and bronchitis and help to fulfill the promise of clean, healthy air for every American.

For the past 8 years, Vice President Gore and I have been guided by the conviction that a strong economy and a healthy environment go hand in hand. Indeed, our Nation entered the 21st century enjoying both unprecedented prosperity and the cleanest air and water in a generation. Our actions a year ago and today will help ensure an even safer and more prosperous future for generations yet to come.

Statement on Signing the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001

December 21, 2000

Today I am signing into law H.R. 4942, the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001. I commend the Congress for approving a bill that provides critical funding for enforcing our Nation's laws, protecting our precious natural resources, promoting international peace, and supporting our diplomatic operations.

Many portions of the Act are considerably improved compared to the previous House

and Senate versions. I appreciate and commend the Congress for the many changes that have been made, including providing additional funding to finance the Lands Legacy program; to improve the health of our Nation's ocean fisheries; to help close the digital divide between our more and less affluent citizens; to improve trade compliance; to prosecute local firearms violations; to toughen our Nation's stance against cybercrime and terrorism; to provide additional law enforcement assistance to Native Americans; to fund peace-keeping requirements; and to improve worldwide embassy security.

I applaud the Congress for providing over \$430 million for the Department of Commerce's components of the Lands Legacy Initiative. This funding will help protect marine sanctuaries; support the new Northwestern Hawaiian Coral Reef Reserve and restore other coral reefs; expand estuarine research reserves; and promote recovery of Pacific coastal salmon runs through grants to western States and Tribes. The Act fully funds activities for the Pacific Salmon Agreement with Canada at \$60 million and for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) work on Columbia River Basin salmon populations. Acceptable funding is also provided for a new climate observation initiative, a new education program with Minority Serving Institutions, and two smaller programs: Global Observations to Benefit the Environment and the Global Disaster Information Network.

The Act takes an important step toward closing the digital divide by providing the requested tripling of funding for the Technology Opportunities Program. This program will provide grants to promote innovative applications of information technology in under-served communities.

I am pleased that over \$1.0 billion is provided for the COPS II/21st Century Policing initiative, the successor to the highly effective Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, which will enable local police departments to begin a five-year plan to hire up to 50,000 additional community police officers, hire new community prosecutors, and expand community-based prevention efforts. While the appropriated funding level is still below my original request, it is

\$444 million above the FY 2000 level, and will enable the COPS II program to fund almost 6,000 new officers in FY 2001.

The Act provides almost \$100 million for the Department of Justice's counterterrorism and cybercrime initiatives. This funding level will allow for improved efforts to meet the growing challenges of terrorism and cybercrime, including State and local first-responder training, staff support for the Joint Terrorism Task Forces and enhanced technology and intelligence-gathering along the northern border. The Department of Justice's components of the Gun Enforcement Initiative are funded at \$103 million. This appropriation will support over 600 Federal, State and local gun prosecutors, and increase research on smart gun technologies. The Indian Country Law Enforcement initiative is funded at \$111 million. This funding, which is \$19 million above the FY 2000 level, will allow the Department of Justice to assist tribes in hiring and equipping law enforcement personnel, constructing detention and court facilities, and developing alternative sentencing programs for alcohol and substance abusers.

I am pleased that the Act provides \$4.7 billion for the regular operations of the Department of State, including diplomatic and consular programs; information technology investments; and, building leases, maintenance and repair. These funds will pay for support costs critical to maintaining the Department's network of overseas posts and the conduct of foreign affairs worldwide. The funded increases include expanded efforts to promote trade compliance and enhance labor and environmental monitoring. Funding for embassy security and construction also includes requested support for projects of the Agency for International Development. The Act also provides full funding for the Administration's pilot program to allow unclassified communication and sharing of information for all U.S. Government agencies operating at an overseas post, as recommended by the Overseas Presence Advisory Panel.

The Act also provides \$846 million for Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities. Funding at this level will allow the United States to continue to support vital UN peacekeeping operations, including ongoing

missions in Kosovo, East Timor, Ethiopia/Eritrea and Sierra Leone.

I am also pleased that the Act provides \$17 million for the Departments of Commerce and State and the United States Trade Representative to help ensure U.S. companies and workers receive the full benefits from the WTO and other bilateral agreements signed by the United States. This funding will help to put experts overseas to deal with compliance issues that continue to hinder fair access to markets, double staff focused on China and Japan, and strengthen antidumping/countervailing duty investigation capabilities.

I am pleased that H.R. 4577, the Consolidated Appropriations bill, modifies immigration provisions included in this Act, and that the modified legislation will ease immigration restrictions on an estimated 700,000 immigrant families living in the United States. The provisions will extend section 245(i) until April 30, 2001, as opposed to January 14, 1998, under current law, to allow aliens (and their spouses and children) who apply for an adjustment of status or a labor certification to remain in the United States until such petition is approved. Additionally, the provisions will create a new, temporary non-immigrant visa for spouses and children of spouses of legal permanent residents and U.S. citizens seeking to enter the United States to await approval of legal permanent resident status for themselves (the "V" visa). The provisions will also allow certain individuals who were not granted amnesty under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 who are currently seeking such relief through the courts to apply for permanent residency. While I am disappointed that the legislation fails to eliminate the disparate treatment under our immigration laws sought for Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, Haitians, and Liberians and does not provide any relief for deserving individuals affected by changes in the 1996 immigration law, it is the best compromise that could be reached after several rounds of intense negotiations.

I am also pleased that the Consolidated Appropriations bill, once signed, will eliminate an objectionable provision in the Commerce/Justice/State Act that purports to protect citizens from the unauthorized sale or

display of social security numbers but would not, in fact, provide privacy safeguards that are adequate.

Although the funding levels in this Act are acceptable, I am troubled that several issues could not be resolved despite my Administration's best efforts during the final negotiations on the Act. Notably, the Act does not include new hate crimes protections, and fails to extend the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund. I strongly urge the next Congress to reconsider these actions in future legislation.

In addition, this bill greatly restricts low-power FM radio broadcast. Low power radio stations are an important tool in fostering diversity on the airwaves through community-based programming. I am deeply disappointed that Congress chose to restrict the voice of our nation's churches, schools, civic organizations and community groups. I commend the FCC for giving a voice to the voiceless and I urge the Commission to go forward in licensing as many stations as possible consistent with the limitations imposed by Congress.

I also oppose language in the Act related to the Kyoto Protocol. The language is inappropriate because the Administration has no intent of implementing the Protocol prior to congressional ratification. The Act includes an additional number of provisions regarding the conduct of foreign affairs that raise serious constitutional concerns. My Administration's objections to these and other language provisions have been made clear in previous statements of Administration policy. I direct the agencies to construe these provisions to be consistent with the President's constitutional prerogatives and responsibilities and where such a construction is not possible, to treat them as not interfering with those prerogatives and responsibilities.

Finally, section 629 of the Act amends the Interstate Horseracing Act of 1978 to include within the definition of the term "interstate off-track wager," pari-mutuel wagers on horseraces that are placed or transmitted from individuals in one State via the telephone or other electronic media and accepted by an off-track betting system in the same or another State. The Department of Justice,

however, does not view this provision as codifying the legality of common pool wagering and interstate account wagering even where such wagering is legal in the various States involved for horseracing, nor does the Department view the provision as repealing or amending existing criminal statutes that may be applicable to such activity, in particular, sections 1084, 1952, and 1955 of Title 18, United States Code.

Several essential modifications to this bill are contained in H.R. 4577, the Consolidated Appropriations bill. I am signing H.R. 4942 into law today because I believe the Act, as modified by H.R. 4577, will meet the overall needs and priorities of the American people. I urge the next Congress and my successor to continue to promote the needs of the American citizenry by pursuing resolution to the troublesome issues I have highlighted above.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
December 21, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4942, approved December 21, was assigned Public Law No. 106-553. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah, 2000

December 21, 2000

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Hanukkah.

Every year during the month of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar, Jews around the world celebrate the Festival of Lights. They remember with sorrow the desecration of the Holy Temple, with pride the triumph of the Maccabees over the forces of oppression, and with a renewed faith in God's providence the miracle of a day's worth of oil burning for eight straight days—a miracle commemorated by lighting the candles of the menorah.

This year, Hanukkah is celebrated during the same week Christians celebrate Christmas and Muslims celebrate the Eid Al-Fitr. The coinciding of these special days, sacred to followers of the world's three Abrahamic

faiths, serves as a powerful reminder of the fundamental values we share: a reverence for our Creator, a belief in human dignity, and a conviction that we must love our neighbors as ourselves. These ancient lessons still hold great meaning for us today, as the global community grows ever closer and American society becomes increasingly diverse. By taking them to heart at this blessed season, we can build a future where we respect one another's differences, embrace our shared values, and where all God's children live together in peace.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a joyous Hanukkah celebration.

Bill Clinton

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Peacekeeping Operations in Kosovo

December 21, 2000

Dear _____:

As required by section 1213 of Public Law 106-398, the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001, I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the contributions of European nations and organizations to the peacekeeping operations in Kosovo.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; and Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services.